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EDITORIAL

To base policy on analogy is generally disadvantageous, for the analogy is rarely exact. Similar symptoms may be due to different diseases. The physician who, because of the symptoms, carelessly concludes that the diseases are the same and the treatment must be the same, is not likely to cure his patients. Britain has a balance of payments problem ; so has India. Britain raises its interest rate and increases import duties ; so must India. Thus presumably argued our highly inadequate Finance Minister. It mattered little to him that the situation in Britain was different from that in India, that consequently even if the prescription worked there, it might be dangerous here.

In inflationary pressures, the Finance Minister finds the root of our present difficult. "First and Foremost" he says, they must be reduced. And will putting one per cent on the Bank Rate, making the lending of money by the banks dearer by one to two per cent, really reduce the inflationary pressures on our economy ? From what do the inflationary pressures mainly arise ? From spending by firms and individuals who borrow from banks and others ? If that was so, there would be some reason to believe that a rise in the Bank Rate, by causing those spending to pause and reconsider, by making them postpone some of the expenditure that would otherwise have been automatically incurred, might have some effect.

But inflationary pressures here are mostly generated by the massive Government spending that has been going on for quite a number of years. To this spending there may be no objection ; it may even be considered essential in the larger interest of the country. Provided due care is taken to prevent waste, corruption, negligence, and endeavour is continuous to obtain full value for money spent, most of us may heartily approve it, though we know that without proper corrective action taken simultaneously, strong inflationary pressures may make themselves felt. Is rendering borrowing dearer going to affect this particular cause of inflation ? Will the Finance Minister not permit spending on the Plan, as already decided, because he as Finance Minister has put up the Bank Rate ? And, if so, why trouble about the rate at all ? It is in his and Government's power to reduce expenditure directly. To touch your nose, you don't have to stand on your head, wave your legs in the air, push your arms out to their full extent, then slowly bend the right until the finger at its end comes in contact with your nose ; that is, you don't, unless you are an exhibitionist and inordinately vain.

In our circumstances, the rise in the Bank Rate is likely to assist inflation rather than reduce it. Because of the rise, goods and services will cost more, not less. It must also be remembered that ours is not a short-term inflation, an episode that handled in orthodox manner will

soon recede into history, leaving the economy stable again. Ours is a chronic, long-term problem, since the larger part of Government spending must continue for years, if we are to industrialise and move on to becoming a modern state. Having raised the Bank Rate, the likelihood of our being able to bring it down again in a short while, as other countries might do and have done, is very little indeed, so that the handicaps inflicted by the rise must continue to afflict the economy for quite a time.

Why, again, when imports are permitted only under license, Government issuing the license, attempt to discourage them by an additional charge? If Government holds more foreign exchange is being devoted to them than is allowable, it would be simpler surely to cancel the licenses issued for some, the least necessary of those Government has hitherto permitted. The extra duty can only add to cost and thus exacerbate inflation, not restrain it. Higher costs may also go against the exports the Finance Minister expresses such anxiety to increase. If ever policies were designed to produce results exactly opposed to the ostensible grounds urged for them, here are they.

The real reason for our parlous state today is that for years we have had incapable governments. They pretend to control the economy, to direct its movements. In reality they rarely know what it is doing or where it is going. Their failure to take proper corrective action in good time has resulted in the mess in which they find themselves. Had they prevented costs from rising by appropriate measures for the procurement and distribution of essentials at reasonable rates to at least the middle and underprivileged classes, our costs of production would have been less, the price of our goods abroad would have been lower, our exports would have been better, our currency stronger, our people less discontented, the country as a whole powerful. Nor was it lack of knowledge of what it was necessary to do that brought them, and us through them, to the present miserable condition. Again and again they were told, only they would not listen. They flooded the country with money; that was easy. But they would do nothing to see that it retained its value or, at worst, lost but a small fraction of it; that was difficult. Not only did it involve hard work. It needed foresight, honesty, impartiality, the understanding that the essence of policy is its implementation, the realisation that all who work in Government, whatever their status, are colleagues, and to be treated as such. And so, our egregious Finance Minister finding his tried weapon, perjury, of little use in this crucial situation, calls upon all Members of Parliament, and presumably, even on us, their constituents, to extend to him the utmost cooperation in the strange measures he is taking! He can scarcely mean what he says, for though a liar, he is reputed to be intelligent, and cannot be wholly unaware of the real import of his acts.

THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE PROBLEM

S. NATARAJAN

THE GOVERNMENT of India's approach to the subject of India's official language has been frustratingly pedantic. Its policies have been governed by considerations of expediency. The Constitution in its articles relating to this matter is more concerned with the difficulties of achieving results than with the necessity for doing things effectively and promptly. Broadly considered, the Constitution lays down

(1) that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in the Devanagari script with international numerals;

(2) that, for a period of fifteen years running from the adoption of the Constitution, English shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union;

(3) that the States of the Union may by legislation adopt a regional language or languages for transacting their official business;

(4) that two or more States may legislate for the use of Hindi as the official language for the conduct of business between themselves;

(5) that the official language for communications between the Union Government and the States shall be the authorised official language of the Union, i.e., English for the period up to 1965 and Hindi thereafter.

There were two reasons for the transition period: First, that it was necessary to spread the knowledge of Hindi over the whole country. For this, the Constitution relied on a system of education which was to be established within ten years from 1950, of free and compulsory education of all children to the age of 15 years. Secondly, it was accepted that Hindi was inadequate to serve the needs of modern administration and would require time to be equipped with new terminology.

The first of these considerations is reasonable enough. The second grew out of the psychological barrier to learning Hindi which had been established during years of dependence on the English language for the subtler and more involved aspects of all-India communication. Since the growth of language is directly dependent on its common use, the creation of terminology ought logically to have been left to the ingenuity of the users of Hindi and not deputed to committees and boards of linguistic pedants watched over by the Union Cabinet. Some expert statistician with little better to do set the target of "new terms" needed at 300,000—a number which has been accepted unquestioningly by politicians, officials and expert language committees. Somewhat naively, the Government applied itself to this task—the processing moving through scientific com-

mittees, linguistic boards and the Union Cabinet at varying rates from 5,000 to 23,000 words a year. Nothing could be a more pathetic demonstration of academic bumbling combined with political fatuousness.

The Union Government had to admit that its ambition of making elementary education free and compulsory for the age group 6-14 within ten years was beyond achievement. From present indications, it is reasonable to conclude that the completion of the programme might be expected around 1985, even allowing for acceleration as interest and experience in education spread. When one turns from the general picture of education to that of Hindi education in the non-Hindi regions of India, the diversions of political considerations play a greater part than a balanced pursuit of an objective.

The oddities arising out of the Government's apologetic attitude towards Hindi are brought out in the following "lucid" explanation of the constitutional arrangement: "Hindi at present is only one of the languages of India of the Eighth Schedule.... A common name 'Hindi' for both the official language of the Union and for a regional language of North India creates confusion in our thinking, leading to mistaken decisions. If we say that Hindi will be an alternate medium in all-India services competitive examinations with English, it will only mean that it will benefit those only in the North whose regional language is Hindi, because Hindi as a common Union language has yet to come into existence.... The Union Hindi has only titular and prospective existence. What exists as a working proposition is the regional Hindi which has begun to be used as the medium of instruction and education in North India. Such use of Hindi is on a par with the use of Gujarati, Marathi, etc., in their respective regions, though, I am afraid, universities in the North perhaps do not see it that way." (Mr. Maganbhai Desai's note of dissent in the Official Language Commission Report, 1956).

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to the language question was typically ambivalent. He, too, drew the distinction between regional Hindi and the official Union Hindi, explaining that, like other regional languages, the Hindi spoken in the North would develop to a rich fullness while the official language would be simpler, more easy to grasp by peoples of the non-Hindi regions. Then, further to gild the pill for them, he proclaimed that every language in use in every State in India was a national language of India and, as such, on a par with Hindi. An impression was sought to be created that within fifteen years an "Indian Hindi," distinct from North Indian Hindi, would come into existence in administration which would be adequate in vocabulary for modern purposes and at the same time widely understood all over the country. Article 351 and the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution sketch in broad outlines the character of official Union Hindi. It deserves quoting:

> It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium

> of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India, and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interference with its genius, the forms, styles and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages.

The Eighth Schedule is a bare enumeration of fourteen languages, including Sanskrit, Hindi and Urdu, and, according to Mr. Nehru's explanation, the list is not exhaustive of the languages of India—in other words, is quite meaningless. This erosion of the Constitution was an accommodation to the pressures to include other languages in the Schedule like English and Sindhi. However, the use of the word national for any language used in any State in India was unfortunate, specially coming from those who had engaged in a losing battle over Mr. Jinnah's two-nation theory. Mr. Nehru could not have been unaware of a spreading opinion since the mid-fifties in Madras State that Mr. Jinnah's strategy of carving out a nation from India was the only escape from the "Congress stranglehold." An Indian language, a language spoken in India, is not a national language of India. A language chosen to be the official language in inter-State and all-India communication cannot not be the national language of India, particularly so when it is so chosen to replace English because it is Indian and therefore more easily understood by Indians and more easily learnt. From this position, there can be no retreat, no compromise to accommodate those who would stake national claims for other languages. On the other hand, the acceptance of a transition period with the open admission that an altogether new language must be created was a piece of monumental folly, particularly when the obligation on the Union to do this was interpreted as an administrative responsibility.

Sir B. N. Rau's original language clause was far more sensible because it confined itself to saying that Hindustani (Hindi or Urdu) and English would be the languages in which Parliament would conduct its business, other languages being permitted by the Speaker to members unable to express themselves adequately in either of these languages, with a translated summary for inclusion in the proceedings. Since summaries are inadequate and members of Parliament wish both to be understood and to understand what is being said around them, this would have been a strong impulse to learn Hindustani in all members. Nothing was said regarding the official language because the language most commonly used in Parliament would in the natural process have become official. There was nothing here to rouse serious antagonism but the adoption of Article 343 in its place amounted to a rejection of the Gandhian formula of one language and two scripts and to concessions to the Hindi element with palliatives for the non-Hindi people. In the light of this, the insinuation of the word, 'Hindustani,' into Article 343 called for some serious thinking. To me, it seems to be a warning which has been ignored.

II

The Constitution envisaged a phased programme for the supplanting of English by Hindi as India's official language in fifteen years. It required the President to constitute a Commission to consider the progress of the Hindi language after five and ten years respectively and provided for a committee of both Houses of Parliament to formulate recommendations on the Commission's Report. The first of these Official Language Commissions was constituted in 1955 and the parliamentary committee submitted its proposals in 1959. The Report made it very plain that the Union Government had no definite policy as regards language but that in North India there had been considerable progress in implementing a Hindi policy which in itself created certain problems in recruiting for the all-India services. No thought had been given to working out a phased programme for Hindi; moreover, the Union Home Ministry, without adequate consideration, had announced a policy of conducting the all-India services competitive languages in English as well as the regional languages, and, when asked how it proposed to implement this, had admitted that it had no idea at all. Again, having been told that some 300,000 new terms would need to be coined to "develop" Hindi into the official Union language, the Government had set about the task in a ponderous manner, the final process involving approval for each word by the Union Cabinet. The Report recommended a policy of getting on with the use of Hindi as it is and using, where necessary, terms from English; of speeding up the work of terminology; and of official participation in the work of spreading the Hindi language in non-Hindi regions. It observed that the progress made by the States and Universities in North India with regional Hindi necessitated provision for examinations in that medium for the all-India Services and hoped that, before other regional languages attained a similar position, the general knowledge of Hindi would spread over the non-Hindi areas to the extent of obviating the provision of tests in those languages. On the question of placing a restriction on the use of English in certain official transactions, the Commission and the Committee both declared their disapproval. At the same time, they both favoured use of Hindi as an additional medium during the transition years as a preparation for the final change-over, adding that it might be necessary to retain English even after 1965. The Committee's report is a terse and effective summary of the Commission's bulky and rather discursive volume. It is difficult to resist the temptation to quote the Commission's astounding peroration. It concludes:

> We shall shape the pattern of our languages and then the pattern of our languages will shape us!.... Language is in a sense profoundly important and in another sense of little or no consequence! It is important at the level of instrumentality. It is a loom on which the life of a people is woven. It is, however, of no intrinsic consequence in itself because it is essentially an instrumentality; the loom, not the fabric; only a vehicle of thought and not the

> thought itself; a receptacle for the traditions, usages and cultural memories of a people, but not their substance. It is not language but education that is aimed at in the schools; it is not language but good government that is aimed at in public administration; it is not language but justice that is sought in the law courts. That which lends itself to the most convenience is the correct solution of the language problem in the various fields. Surely, there does not have to be heat and passion over the issue of language, ever the instrumentality and not the substance!

There were three dissents to the Report and a rejoinder lamenting the Commission's inability to secure unanimity despite the appeals of its persuasive Chairman, Mr. B. G. Kher. Seven of the thirty members of the Parliamentary Committee dissented from *that* report, the majority of the dissenters bemoaning the lack of enthusiasm for Hindi of the two documents. And between them, there was any amount of heat and passion. As a matter of fact, the vehemence with which the Official Language Commission applies itself to argue the case for Hindi while reiterating that the Articles of the Constitution have said the last word on the subject and so the matter is closed, suggests that there was considerable objection to the slightest hint of implementing the constitutional directive. There is too a strange querulousness in the Commission's reproof to the Madras Government for not making Hindi compulsory because some 80 per cent of the students were learning it voluntarily: "It is not known," observes the Commission, "who the 20 per cent odd pupils are who do *not* avail (italics in original) of the benefit of optional Hindi instruction. It is possible that these are from the educationally backward classes. If so, the voluntary character of this instruction apparently prejudices a section of the community who have the greatest need for help and encouragement in educational matters.... Those educationally advanced are capable of looking after their interests without being compelled to do so." This extraordinary admonition loses none of its sting by being set in a long homily concerning the wisdom of the Constitution, the weight of numbers of Hindi-speaking people and the folly of not falling into line.

The mills of government grind slowly. At the same leisurely pace at which the new terminology was being framed, the Commission's Report which was submitted in 1956, was published in 1957; considered by the parliamentary committee for eighteen months; and submitted with recommendations to the President in February 1959. The President's second Official Language Commission, due in 1960, appears to have been abandoned though the 1956 Commission and the 1958-59 Committee have left many matters over for its consideration. In 1963, two significant developments occurred: First, the Hindi word-builders presumably finished their task of framing 300,000 terms though we are not told at what stage how many of these words are. 'India 1964', the Government's annual reference book, observes a discreet silence on this subject.

Secondly, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru assured the country that English would be retained as an additional official language until the non-Hindi states felt it could be given up. It is necessary to bear in mind that (1) Hindi has been the official language of India and was supposed to be used as an additional official language for at least the past five years as a preparation for the change-over; (2) in a number of departments of the Central Government work would be seriously hampered if Hindi replaced English as from January 26, 1965; (3) the pre-requisites, particularly in the groundwork of education, for switching on to Hindi are far from being fulfilled; and (4) English, though it might have been continued to be used all these years for official purposes, was not recognized after 1950 as the official language of the country. In other words, Hindi had the status without the function, English the function without the status.

After the appointed date, the position is as broadly sketched in the two reports and the assurances of Mr. Nehru—i.e., Hindi takes on its functions without restrictions being placed on the use of English. The Official Language Act passed by Parliament allows for the continued use of English and the Nehru formula envisages the retention of English until the non-Hindi States themselves are ready and willing to give it up. But certain automatic and unconsidered incidents occurring on January 26, 1965, evidently to carry out the constitutional directive, roused a frenzied agitation in Tamilnad and, apart from the distressing spectacle of violent civic disturbances accompanied by damage to public property, the consequences threaten to muddle the language position even more. I agree with Mrs. Indira Gandhi that it is necessary to think out our language policy afresh and to frame a consistent and well-phased programme of implementation. For this, it is necessary to understand why these manifestations of undisciplined passion exploited by obviously organised groups should have taken place. The sudden subsidence is as much an indication of calculated effort as the widespread destruction of property. It will also help if the relevant part of the Constitution is read again carefully and with some intelligence.

III

It is nothing new that there is in Tamilnad a smouldering apprehension of exploitation by North India which is for the largest organized group in Madras State associated with Brahmins. There is an irony in this prejudice affecting the attitude towards Hindi when one considers that in the North itself Hindi is a regional language. The Brahmo leader Keshub Chunder Sen influenced the Arya Samaj founder, Dayanand Saraswati, to preach in Hindi rather than in the Sanskrit which Dayanand favoured. Moreever, the more energetic parts of North India have little respect for the Brahmin; and Sir Sankaran Nair once cited scriptural authority to support his assertion that no Brahmin could preserve the purity of his caste by sojourning long in the Punjab. However, the fact is there that Hindi today is looked upon as the vehicle of North

Indian imperialism, very much as Sanskrit in the thirties was by the Self-Respect Movement in Madras.

The second point that needs serious consideration is a suspicion often expressed by Bengali writers that the State of Uttar Pradesh with its strong political block is seeking to underpin its ministerial domination by establishing an administrative foundation beneath it. It is not without interest that Bengal seeks to effect a corrective by dividing that sprawling State into two. This is often put forward also as a measure to rescue Urdu and the Muslim leadership of Uttar Pradesh. It is relevant here to mention that the insistence on Sanskritization of the Hindi enthusiasts, the rejection of the Gandhian formula of a national language written in two scripts by the Constitution-makers, and the implied preference for literary Hindi over colloquial Hindi contained in the terminology methods are all calculated to add to the apprehensions of the non-Hindi regions.

The third point is the matter of Central Government employment. The broad facts are that, with the increase of difficulties in securing employment in the State services, there are distinct classes in the non-Hindi regions of South India pressing for employment at the Centre. It is not inconceivable that as a consequence the feeling against the Central Government in the South is intensified which again will react in reinforcing the demand for regional language parity and quotas in the all-India services examinations. This, as the Kher Commission observed and as the Government of India strongly endorsed, would be destructive of the very character of these services. Illusions die hard. Nevertheless, I mention for what it is worth the hard fact that, in Delhi, over 80 per cent of the Central Government employees are North Indians.

Fourthly, because of the nature of the South Indian political climate, it is irrational to look to a political solution there of the present impasse. This has been demonstrated both by the resignations of Mr. C. Subramaniam and Mr. O. Alagesan and the advocacy by the Madras Chief Minister, Mr. Bhaktavatsalam, of a permanent place for English as a second official language. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's plea for annulling the language section of the Constitution is another indicator.

These are difficult complications. But there can only be one solution and it is as well that we accept it at once without straying into compromises and policies of appeasement. That is, the pressing forward with Hindi as it is now without waiting for the development of a special Union Hindi equipped with a set of words which will depend for their very existence on popular acceptance over several generations. The words will come as the necessity for them is felt and it is less important to strive after the ideal than to reach a working arrangement. There need be no serious fears now of adminstrative standards falling because we have little at the present moment in this respect to be proud of. But the first requirement before we proceed to plan for the future is to clear up the present mess. Obviously the Bhaktavatsalam Government has been culpably negligent or incapable of law and order. Mr. Kamaraj Nadar

has a reputation as an able administrator. It was unwise to have removed him. At any rate, he has fulfilled whatever could be expected of him as Congress President. He might be asked to take the helm again at Madras in the interests of constitutional government, as Mr. Rajagopalachari did in 1952. If this is done and a phased programme on language adopted which would obviate the kind of surprises which were sprung upon the country on January 26 and for which somehow no one is quite able to fix the responsibility, there is no reason why there should be any abdication of decision to the non-Hindi States. The recent flare-up must be regarded as an emotional, unreasoning outburst and not be blown up into a symbol of Tamilnad aversion to the North.

IV

Finally, on the subject of the South Indian units of the Republic learning Hindi, the argument in favour of the South learning Hindi seriously was never put better than by Mr. Rajagopalachari in the introduction to the *Hindi-English Self-Instructor* (1928) :

"Of the 30 crores that live in India, 14 crores speak Hindi or some very near dialect of that language. Bengali, Assamese and Uriya may be grouped together and are spoken by 6 crores. Marathi and Gujarati are spoken by 3 crores. The Dravidian group, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam and Tulu are spoken by 6 crores in all. The writer of the general introduction in the 'Times of India Year Book', who may be expected not to exaggerate, says:—"There is a common element in the main languages of Northern and Central India, which renders their speakers, without any great conscious change in their speech, mutually intelligible to one another, and this common basis already forms an approach to a lingua franca over a large part of India." To this should be added that for the Bengali and Western India groups, it is very easy to acquire a working knowledge of Hindi. The problem is a serious one only to South Indians. From the political as well as cultural and business points of view, it is imperatively necessary for the South Indians to learn Hindi. Whether and when India is going to have Swaraj may be answered differently by different people. Whatever measure of autonomy may be given to provinces, if India is to stand external and internal shocks, a strong Central Government is inevitable, controlling many important all-India subjects, and exercising powers of interference in all subjects, whenever grave occasions for such interference may arise. The intelligentsia of India must therefore undertakes the duty of carrying out the will of the people and manage central affairs, as well as provincial matters.

"Can the deliberations of the Central Assembly and the transactions of the high officers of State and other exercising authority in the Central Government be permitted to be done in English? Obviously not, if we desire democracy to be true in fact as well as in form—if we do not want educated men to be appointed to places of power and influence and con-

duct their affairs apart from the people and the electorate. To make popular control real the State language must be one spoken and understood by large masses of people. Hindi is bound to be the language of the Central Government and the Legislature and also of the Provincial Governments in their dealings with each other and with the Government of India.

"If South India does not desire to be practically disfranchised in regard to the future Central Government of India and if educated men of the South do not wish to be disabled from taking part in all-India affairs or influencing the decisions taken in such matters, it is necessary that Hindi should be learnt by them. It is not possible or desirable to impose English for our sake on all and weaken the people's control over their representatives all over India. The Nehru-Report-Constitution has, it may be noted, adopted Hindi as the State language for India. This is the logical consequence of Self-Government of India. In educational matters, if we wish to avoid waste of energy and penalisation of a whole generation, we must anticipate things by a few years. The present generation of boys should therefore immediately take up Hindi whether it be introduced in the school curriculum or not. Otherwise they would practically lose a valuable part of the rights of Indian citizenship and repent when it may be too late.

"No less important than political reasons, the cultural unity of India demands the knowledge of a common spoken language. The South will be a dead branch of the tree, if it is not in living daily contact with the larger India, and here too we cannot rest on the English medium, which is bound to recede into the international background as India advances towards its goal.

"But more obvious than either politics or culture is the problem of obtaining a livelihood. A knowledge of Hindi, sufficient at least to speak, understand and write, will at once widen the field in which educated men of South India can offer themselves for service. The pressure of competition in one's own province is driving many thousands of educated men abroad, and a working knowledge of Hindi would certainly better the chances of our young men in public or commercial services all over India.

"The arguments for Hindi do not mean the neglect of the mother-tongue. The importance of Hindi is in its being the only possible State Language of India, and therefore the need for the Southerners to learn it. It cannot and should not lead to neglect of the mother-tongue, any more than citizenship involves the neglect of domestic duties. The family rests on the State and the State rests on the family. Neither can be neglected. So also must boys and girls in India learn the language of India, while attending to the language of their own province and people."

HOW SAD BUT, ALAS, HOW TRUE!

LAEEQ FUTEHALLY

WE HAVE, by now, had considerable practice in rebutting, refuting, and denying any book which is disparaging to India. Beginning with Katherine Mayo we have battled with every author who refused to present India through rose-coloured glasses. And the number of such books has increased of late. In British days we could beguile intending critics by the beautiful trappings which were part of the life of the rich and the important; later on we overawed them with the mystery of the spiritual politics of Mahatma Gandhi. These things deflected the attention of visitors from our every other kind of poverty. Their removal has now left us naked and exposed. Our only refuge is to be ourselves often unaware of just how much is exposed.

"It is well that Indians are unable to look at their country directly for the distress they would see would drive them mad." Naipaul says in his 'Area of Darkness' (Andre Deutsch). And our carefully cultivated habit of not seeing the obvious—whether physically or mentally, is a theme which he probes again and again, exploring all the fascinating byways which lead off from it. And yet the ability to see directly is much rarer than Naipaul seems to realize. Analyze the achievements of Voltaire and Shaw and fifty per cent of it is nothing more than the gift of seeing truly.

Naipaul swears that Indians physically do not *see* the excreta on the roadside, along the railway tracks, nor the squatters who seriously take up their positions in the open every morning. The verb "to see" here is applicable if it is used in an elastic sense, in fact in two elastic senses. There are those who do not "see" because the sight is so familiar and so well accepted that there is, in a way, nothing really to see; there are others who do not see because they are tired and hopeless of any change and who, as Naipaul himself explains it, would go mad if they "saw" it in the sense of letting it register afresh each time. On its positive side this refusal to see things as they exist has its uses as well. It enables us to see the hired junk of film sets as Mughal splendour and a sloppily festooned hall as a dignified setting for a political meeting or a wedding. We accept the intention and ignore the fact.

Our mental vision is befogged in a similar way. The stock case of worshipping and at the same time heartily illtreating the cow is brought forth again, with all the excitement of a new discovery. Other foreigners, as well as a few sensible Indians, usually carry the argument into the realm of economics and point out the disastrous consequences of allowing vast herds of starving cattle to roam about the countryside destroying useful vegetation. The double waste is almost unbearable to all men of practical good sense. Naipaul, because of his greater sensibility, is appalled

merely by the illogic and hypocrisy of our behaviour. It is, one feels, a judgment at a higher level when we are already guilty and self-condemned on a much lower count. Reason, thought, sensitivity have nothing to do with our treatment of the cow. The only relevant factor in our attitude is habit.

The fear of thinking, and of taking the further step of expressing our thoughts has become second nature to us. Why is it that we cannot and indeed do not wish to think ? Is it because of centuries of repressive political rule ? Is it because thinking has always been the job of the priests, the pundits and the moulvis and there is no point in each one thinking for himself anyway ? Is it because of social and domestic conditions where individual decisions have no place among the well-mannered ? Has it really something to do with the barely understood foreign language which creates in our minds a "twilight world" into which no sharp clear thought can enter ? Or is it that we have adopted the principle of the young Tory lad who assured his father that he would never join the Labour party because "I will never think" ?

Whatever the reason Naipaul is absolutely right when he says that no event, whether strange or familiar, ever produces in us an effort to speculate or to reason. Our very gossip is nothing but a retailing, without comment, of facts heard at second hand. "It is a unique type of gossip. How can it be described ? It is unslanted. It states facts and draws no conclusions." There is no linking together, no interpretation, no personal beliefs or opinions which develop or grow out of these facts. Naipaul's remarks are levelled at smart young Indian business executives, but they have a much wider application than he suggests. Even those whom we might call our practising intellectuals do not like to think always. They reserve their thinking caps for special academic occasions. Thought is not a natural, unconscious process of looking at, of weighing and assessing everyday affairs.

With the majority of us, conformism and acceptance has settled into our very bones. If we ever admit the need for any thought at all we believe at the same time that it is the prerogative of the man at the top, the "leader", to exercise it. Unfortunately the man at the top, having but lately been one of the multitude himself, is in no case to fulfil our expectations. Clear thinking comes as a result of constant practice. It cannot be switched on suddenly when a man gets to the top after a lifetime of neglect.

In a sense, the quality of the moral life of a people is directly connected to the quality of their thinking. It is useless first to point out that a people are not capable of cogent thought and then separately to attack their values, their morals, their manners, their social consciousness, their behaviour and their business ethics. Their shortcomings in all these fields are already implied and accounted for by their refusal to think, whether about fundamentals or about immediate issues. Where, as with us, habit and prejudice continue to be accepted in lieu of reasoning, the very roots

which might have fed the growth of new ethical standards are cut off; and contemporary problems of axiology have for us a remote theoretical interest only.

That Naipaul can "see" India and Indians exactly as they are there is no question. But if his vision is in fact as straight as he thinks, he must surely at some time have also "seen" the grandeur of our countryside. If their defects make it impossible for him to admire the people, at least the physical country must have impressed him with its scale and beauty. There is an almost uncanny lack of reference to the loveliness of the land, and it must be a record for someone to write so many chapters about Kashmir without once letting fall a word of open praise for its beauty. A too conscious avoidance of cliches creates its own imbalance.

Even our monuments are denied merit. The Taj is compared to Blenheim Palace in its extravagant pretentiousness. But the analogy here is false from the very first premise. The Taj has overpowering beauty. Blenheim does not, and its aesthetic claims are supported mainly by its large grounds—one of the best example of the genius of Capability Brown, admittedly, but not to be included among the finest specimen of world architecture. I am not even sure that the Taj can be called useless and wasteful. If Shah Jahan could have foreseen it, the investment of a few crores in a time which three hundred years later would bring in a large and continuing income from tourists was not really a bad investment for the country.

A part of the explanation for the harshness of Naipaul's reaction to India must be sought in the reasons which brought him here. He did not come as an idle visitor to be amused and entertained, he came in order to discover a homeland. And his disappointment was obviously deep in proportion to the importance of his mission. The first day in Bombay, with its typical incident of bureaucratic muddle, confirmed the distrust of the country which he seems to have begun to feel even before he saw it. Every personal contact with Indians which is described in the book is strange, unsatisfactory or dishonest. Were there no Indians who were kind, generous or hospitable? The reader is left to infer that there must have been, for without their help no visitor could have seen and done all the things Naipaul saw and did. And yet, for us to claim that the other side of the medal is never presented, is to attempt to side-track the main point, which is very simple. It is just that all the horrid things which Naipaul says about India are factually true and must be taken to heart.

The Chinese invasion of 1962 showed up to the world our weaknesses, our inefficiency, our complacency and the total absence of everything admirable in our administration. At the same time it did bring to the surface, for a short time, a generous spirit of patriotism among every section of the people which, for us, to a slight extent redeemed our shame. For us, accustomed to years of selfish bickering, this heartening manifesta-

tion of unity coloured the whole deplorable episode. But this was something which could not, obviously have been felt by a foreigner, and the value of Naipaul's pitiless account of those times is to remind us that, on the whole, his view is the more correct. We are inclined to feel that temporary oneness rather more strongly, and the lack of integrity rather less strongly, than we should. It is possible that even the "togetherness" of those times owed something to self-interest. As a nation we have the gift for turning any event, however disgraceful, into an occasion for self-congratulation. It will not hurt us, for once, to take, chew over and digest the bitter pill of intelligent criticism.

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LEADERSHIP IN WORLD AFFAIRS

VERA MICHELES DEAN

ON SUNDAY, January 31, *The New York Times*, on its front page, published a poignant article by James Reston in which that newspaper's veteran commentator reported the sober mood produced in Washington by the pomp and circumstance of the funeral ceremonies staged the day before by the British in honor of Sir Winston Churchill. He noted that these ceremonies, memorably carried by radio and television throughout the length and breadth of the United States, had induced deep soul-searching among the recently victorious Democrats about the leadership the United States could or should exercise in the future on the world scene.

In the perspective of history, the world will recall Churchill in three important respects. The first is that Churchill, in a period dominated more and more by specialization in all human occupations, was a man who would have done honour to the Renaissance. His interests were as diverse as the contemporary world. This great statesman, who in another age could well have been an absolute prince, was completely at ease in the House of Commons of "The Mother of Parliaments." After his defeat as Prime Minister at the close of World War II, when some of his friends told him that it was below his dignity to spend his time on the Opposition benches, Churchill said that he could not think of giving up his seat. "I am a child of the House of Commons," he solemnly announced. Yet he was not only a great political leader in time of peace anl a distinguished, although always controversial, planner of strategic operations in time of war. He was also one of the great historians of the twentieth century, who has left an unforgettable portrait of his fatherland. He was a painter. He understood the importance of science and of technology in contemporary society.

But, born in the nineteenth century, he did not understand as clearly the necessity of social and economic reforms. In this respect, he cannot be compared with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, or even with President Charles de Gaulle. And the British voters, Conservatives as well as Laborites, with perspicacity which has made it possible for them to perpetuate democratic institutions through periods of near-disaster, as they did in two world wars, perceived that this man, capable of superhuman leadership in war, would not necessarily prove capable of solving the superhuman problems of reajustment to peace. Yet these very voters—and this is the second remarkable aspect of Churchill—had recognized his unwaveringly passionate love of England, and his faith in the courage of the British who, for their part, had complete confidence in him during the harsh and sombre days of World War II.

But the very patriotism of Churchill explains the great difficulty he had in understanding the political, economic and social forces which produced communism in the U.S.S.R., and anti-colonialism in India and other countries of Asia, the Midldle East and Africa.

Churchill detested communism, and saw it as the implacable enemy not only of England, but of the entire West. Nevertheless, always a realist when the interests of England were at stake, when Hitler attacked the U.S.S.R. in June 1941, Churchill immediately offered his assistance to Moscow, and remained determined to wage war side by side with the Russians, even though he feared the territorial and political aspirations of Stalin. He found Roosevelt naive in the negotiations of the English-speaking countries with Moscow during the war, although at war's end he was ready to divide Eastern Europe into spheres of influence between Russia and Britain. And then, after the war, in his celebrated address at Fulton, Missouri, in 1946, he declared that an Iron Curtain had descended on Europe, from Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste on the Adriatic.

But if Churchill did not fully understand communism, he also did not understand that his anti-colonialism alarmed Roosevelt during the war. For Roosevelt foresaw, as also did de Gaulle, that it would be impossible at war's end to maintain existing colonial empires. And while, in 1949, Churchill, ahead of many of his contemporaries, foresaw the possibility of a European Union which, in co-operation with the United States could have served as a counterweight to the U.S.S.R., he came to doubt more and more that such a union could serve the interests of England. And it was with a sigh of relief that he returned to the idea of an England independent of the continent, but linked by a variety of common interests with the United States and the Commonwealth.

Thus, Churchill ended where he had begun—as a citizen devoted to his fatherland, who saw the problems of the modern world in terms of relations with other nations which could serve the interests and assure the security of England. Man of the Renaissance who spent his youth in the latter years of the nineteenth century, he gave inspiration to the rest of the world during the most terrible war in history. And, as architect, with Roosevelt and Stalin, of the victory over Hitler which made possible the creation of the United Nations, he gave to generations now living the possibility of building in peace for a new era.

Today, the United States, which has fallen heir to many of the world obligations once shouldered by Britain, asks itself whether, and in what way it can fulfill these obligations in a world profoundly transformed by the near-end of colonial empires, growing fissures in the two post-war blocs led by Washington and Moscow, and the emergence on the world scene, dramatically visible at the United Nations, of over fifty newly independent nations of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Leadership on the world front entails far different problems, and requires far different qualities, from leadership on the home front. A

leader within his own nation-state, no matter how strenuous or even dangerous his tasks may be, has the advantage of knowing at first-hand the problems and aspirations of his fellow-citizens. Whether he is elected to office through the free choice of his people, or assumes power by force, he is given, or claims to have a mandate from his fellow-citizens—or, as the Chinese put it more dramatically, a "mandate from heaven." If he fails to satisfy his people, he sooner or later loses his mandate, either by defeat at the polls, or by forceful overthrow of his regime. In either case, while his removal from the scene may have repercussions outside his own country, particularly in our age of jet planes and Telstar communications, the most immediate impact is made on his own people.

But the problems of leadership in world affairs are far different, both in character and in impact. A nation which seeks to lead other nations—either in defending them against actual or potential foes, as for example in South Vietnam, or in their economic and social development, as the United States is doing today for some 90 countries—assumes an exceptional responsibility. For this responsibility concerns not only its own security and development, but the kind of leadership which the United States had avoided from the founding of the Republic until World War I, and undertook, only with great reluctance, after World War II, from which other great powers had emerged gravely weakened by wartime destruction. For, let us recall—strange as it may seem today—that for nearly 150 years the United States, at the bidding of President George Washington, foreswore all entangling alliances, and was, in effect, what we today call a non-aligned nation.

What should acceptance of leadership in world affairs mean for the United States? It should mean three important things.

First, it means a determination to understand the ever-changing world situation at any given time as clearly, and deal with it as dispassionately, as possible. Nothing could be more dangerous for a great power like the United States than to look at the world "through a glass darkly"—a glass obscured by prejudice, fear, or lack of impartial information about other peoples of the world. These three obscuring factors, to give an important example, have long affected American judgment of events in the U.S.S.R. and in China. They led to a policy of non-recognition of the Soviet government for 16 years, and of Peking, so far, for 14 years—contrary to international law, which prescribes that a government, whatever its origin or character, should be recognized when it is in control of the territory of the state over which rules. Knowledge of the circumstances which led to the two great revolutions of our times—in Russia and China—distasteful as we may find them, would have enabled us to pass informed judgment on those events with a sense of historical perspective which is too often absent from the making of foreign policy, particularly when policy is adjusted to meet what is believed to be public opinion.

There is no doubt whatever that public opinion *must* be taken into consideration in a democracy like the United States. But here comes the

second important aspect of world affairs leadership. What is public opinion? It is particularly important that, in a democracy, public opinion should be not the result of ignorance or passion, but of accurate information dispassionately obtained and considered. To achieve this end, we owe it to ourselves, as well as to the rest of the world, to make certain that our citizens obtain impartial information about world affairs—and obtain it not only in our colleges and universities where instruction on this subject is rapidly expanding, yet which only a small percentage of our citizens attend, but, far more important, in our elementary and high schools, where the majority of Americans—and this also means of our voters—receive their terminal education.

A democratic government, for its part, must listen carefully, without fear or favour, to what we poetically call "the voice of the people", and this means of the entire people—not merely the voice of special pleaders or organized lobbies, as was long done in the case of the China Lobby which opposed recognition of Peking. In the final count, it is the President must decide between possible alternative courses, and take the responsibility for his decision.

And, third, and most important in dealing with world affairs, we must take into consideration not only the interests of the United States, which understandably come first, as is true of all nations, but also the interests —and thus the feelings—of peoples outside our borders. There was a time when great powers thought of themselves as benefactors of the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America—regarded by the West as inferior—whose territories they acquired, whose resources they utilized for their own economic development, and whose ports and cities they used for strategic purposes.

This was the policy which the British immortalized by the phrase "white man's burden." And there is no doubt that many of the tasks at one time performed by white men overseas were useful to the peoples they ruled. But the days of the "white man's burden" are over. They are over in considerable part because Americans—descendants of immigrants from other lands—who first came here as colonists from Britain and France, rose up against Britain's rule, and from that time on unalterably opposed the colonialism of Western European nations, as they now oppose colonialism by the U.S.S.R. and China. Thus Americans effectively aided the dissolution of colonial empires after World War II.

Yet today we do not always understand that some of our own policies, no matter how well-intentioned, appear to others as tinged not only by self-interest—this is normal behaviour for all nations—but by colonial attitudes, notably in Latin America. And in South Vietnam, where the United States has acted alone, with little or no consultation either with our allies or with the United Nations, we have found ourselves shouldering the white man's burden—but in a post-colonial period, when this role is no longer acceptable to others, and therefore not workable for the United States.

The essence of leadership in world affairs is to recognize not only the potentialities, but also the limits, of such leadership, and the need, in our age, when great powers can no longer dominate the scene, of working with other nations, to create conditions under which all can work effectively—not only for the good of the rich and the powerful, as in the past, but of all peoples, however poor and weak.

That the temper of 1965 runs to a more modest appraisal of the leadership of the United States in world affairs than has been made in the past twenty years is indicated by the comment of the dean of American commentators, Walter Lippmann, long known for his interest in constructive foreign policy, who on February 2 wrote favourably about President Johnson's concern for domestic reforms, adding: "The time has come to stop beating our heads against stone walls under the illusion that we have been appointed policemen to the human race."

In short, the problem of leadership i world affairs, as in domestic affairs, is to forge the Great Society of the future, which the United Nations, however limited its present capacity to act, is constantly striving to achieve.

For today our best hope of making our leadership acceptable to other peoples, all of whom think in terms of their interests, like ourselves, is not to impose it upon others—but only offer it to those who wish to accept it, yet have no desire to become our supine and unquestioning followers. As Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey said at the opening of the impressive Nehru exhibition in New York on January 27, the United States feels it has an unwritten alliance with India—an alliance based not on specific pledges, but on the values the two nations share: "the rule of law, free elections, the checks and balances of a written constitution, a belief in the integrity of the individual, a desire for extending the benefits of modern society to all."

Between nations, as between individuals, the strongest bonds are not those which are forged by military power or by money. Let us practice what the young lovers in the American musical *No Strings* tell each other:

No strings—no strings at all
Except our own devotion
No other bonds at all.

MATCH-MAKING

WINIFRED BOSE

I DON'T KNOW whether or not you have ever systematically struck your way through a whole box of matches or not. I have, and the results were extraordinary. Roughly 20% of the contents of any brand of matches are not sub-standard, but quite useless. With the slight pressure required to strike a match, the head may drop off, and many sticks break too close to the heads to make striking again possible. Some matches are completely headless, some have tiny heads, which, when struck, produce a feeble spark, but not a flame. Yet others have double heads, and go off more like a cracker than a match. During the rainy season, a box of matches is temporarily out of action altogether.

Almost everyone uses matches. A newcomer to the country, sampling his first box of Indian matches, immediately gets the impression that if we cannot manufacture a simple article like a matchstick, then what can be expected of other manufactured goods! Are we really such nincompoops that the manufacture of a matchstick is beyond us? We are not. Most certainly we are not. Yet we continue to produce so many sub-standard goods, every Indian consumer will pay more, go out of his way to purchase and often stoop to smuggling, to obtain goods made abroad in countries which safeguard the consumer, and where manufactured goods are reliable. All this does not mean we do not produce some high quality manufactured items. We do, but they are lost in a flood of inferior articles, responsible for our loss of reputation in India and abroad.

Dr. P. V. Cherian, the Governor of Maharashtra, was "absolutely scandalised" because European countries were circulating anti-Indian propaganda on the subject of our sub-standard manufactured goods. It is inconceivable how any Indian holding a post as respected as that of a Governor, can be so naive as to think we do not produce sub-standard goods, or to think that any country will deliberately dub imported goods as sub-standard, if they are in fact not sub-standard. Doesn't Dr. Cherian know that people are dying with unfailing regularity because of spurious Indian drugs? Doesn't he know that we do not even produce a decent box of matches? He does, for in the same breath in which he expresses annoyance at complaints from Europe, he exhorts Indian manufacturers to "set the record straight for the sake of national prestige". "The Europeans," says Dr. Cherian, "have created a bad name for us all over the world, saying that Indian goods cannot be relied on". Indian manufacturers, Dr. Cherian, are the ones who have created a bad name for us all over the world. Is there an Indian consumer—and who better than a housewife knows the rubbish we handle day after day with frustration and irritation—who does not know the truth of the complaints from Europe?

Some ten years ago I bought a German electric toaster in India costing 60 rupees. In Germany, the same toaster sold at a retail price of 25 rupees. A few years later, in the same shop where I bought my toaster, I saw what appeared to be an exact replica, and was told that it was an Indian made appliance. I inspected it at close quarters. It was a cheap-looking, very shoddy imitation of the German toaster, with an incredibly crude finish. Let that part pass; the Japanese used to do the same sort of copying, improved on the original, and sold at half the price. This masterpiece of a toaster made in India cost 60 rupees, though it couldn't be given away anywhere in Europe, and it is still available on the market.

We may not, nor should we have, any love for the Portuguese, but we do love the sardines they can, for which they still command a world market, selling sardines at the ridiculously low price of around 25 paise to the consumer. Our indigenous canned sardines, not bad, but certainly not up to international standards, cost in India, about 600 times more than Portuguese or foreign brands.

You would think it was a very simple business to standardise the size of electric household plugs, and indeed it is a simple business, but can any householder deny that very few plugs fit correctly, some being so tight they have to be wedged in with force, and others so loose, they drop out at a touch ?

A reader of *The Indian Express,* in a letter to the editor, deplored the uncontrolled sale in the market of "sub-standard quality articles of daily use". He gave as an example a hot sale line in the way of cheap water heaters consisting of 2 electrodes, dangerous appliances. Customers are seldom aware of the dangers of such electrical appliances, but are they protected in any way from sub-standard junk ? Not at all.

One would think that it was child's play to design a workable thread on a screw-topped ashtray or a vacuum flask. It is in fact, child's play, but how many of us fume and curse as we try again and again to replace the lid of a flask, to find that it can only be done after repeated efforts, if at all ?

There was a firm which started producing certain spare parts for cotton looms in India. It was the only firm of its kind in the country, and import of foreign spare parts was prohibited. This firm had the monopoly. They brought out an expert craftsman from England, who had devoted 26 years of his life to perfecting this particular spare-part, and his service had been in a firm which at one time did enormous trade with India, and possesses an international reputation. The skilled craftsman was allowed for a short time to turn out accurate spare-parts to satisfied mills, but all second orders were fulfilled with sub-standard spare-parts. The goods rejected by the foreign technician as imperfect, were sent out as perfect, on instructions from the manufacturer. The English technician went home in disgust, unwilling to jeopardise his reputation, but this firm is still selling its muck to mills, though its labour can produce perfect spare-parts. I have on good authority from Weaving

Masters that they cannot purchase a single reliable spare-part from the firm, but they have no other choice than to accept sub-standard products.

I would like to see just one German or American firm operating in India constructing roads in competition with our contractors. Our national highways are a disgrace. One foreign firm operating here would clean up Indian contractors in next to no time, but authorities go on and on permitting them to patch up jig-saw puzzle surfaces—never roads in the first place—and pay out hard cash to cheats for nothing, or could it be that their own personal pockets are well lined ?

Now let's get this straight. Can we really not make a decent box of matches ? Of course we can. Then why don't we make matches and so many other manufactured goods properly ? The average manufacturer is not interested in producing quality goods. He can dump all the junk he likes in the internal market, for consumers have no choice, and are woefully apathetic anyway. The average Indian manufacturer is interested in making quick money. He is too greedy and too grasping, too shortsighted to see the folly of the blind-alley he treads. He can may be hold the internal market for a time, and that will satisfy his needs, for he makes his pile so fast, what happens afterwards does not concern him He will lose the external market, but he does not care for Indian prestige or self-respect. He has no self-respect of his own, so he cannot conceive it in others. As long as his own personal requirements are met, and they are, he is more than satisfied.

All over the country manufacturers bemoan their inadequate labour, labour that can hold its own anywhere if only we had just a few decent human beings content to take a fair share of profit for quality goods, be they matches, machinery or roads. But we have very few such manufacturers. Dr. Cherian should think not twice, but ten times, before he deplores overseas criticism of Indian manufacturing. India can make it as well as the next country, and the fact that she so often does not, is a matter for serious thought. Managerial courses are utterly meaningless. What we need are courses for industrialists who thwart skill at every end and turn.

"Desire for money will produce hard-fistedness and not enterprise."

IMPRESSIONS FROM AN AMERICAN CAMPUS

SYLVESTER DA CUNHA

IN INDIA, tongues are inclined to click disapprovingly at the suggestion of students mixing with politics. When Benaras University or some other seat of learning shuts down in the face of student turbulence, public opinion generally deprecates the fact that the modern student prefers the picket to the pen. It is no consolation that students in other countries can be similarly disposed but it does lend perspective. A few weeks ago students in Berkeley, California kicked over the traces. They went on a mass protest against alleged restrictions over 'freedom of speech' on the campus. Twenty-odd thousand students raised boycotts, staged sit-ins, book-downs (or whatever it is they do on campuses). They brought the university to a grinding halt and hurtled the affair into national headlines. The issue that triggered off the rumpus was to do with a pavement at the edge of the campus. A favourite and traditional student stamping ground for raising political funds and distributing pamphlets, this pavement was always considered to be under the jurisdiction of the Town. Recently it was discovered that it in fact came under the shadow of the Gown. The university authorities had thus to extend to this strip of real estate the same rules that applied all over the campus. These rules, it must be said, are liberal in the extreme. While barring political *party* activity, as such, it does encourage the student to immerse himself in political enquiry of all kinds. In fact, the President of Berkeley was recently honoured for being in the vanguard of a unique experiment to give students larger scope and a greater participation in campus affairs. The Freedom of Speech Movement, as it has been labelled, has still not blown over at the moment of writing and its repercussions will probably be felt for years to come.

What is interesting is that it has caught the nation with a dropped jaw. This is perhaps the first time in the U.S. that students have organized them on political lines and in opposition to authority. Students in the U.S. do not have the political tradition of those in Asia and Africa where students have been an important force in freedom movements. In the U.S. students have generally confined their energies to such burning questions as the hour-limit up to which they can have girls in their rooms. The student representatives of a mid-Western campus boasted in its '64 report that one of its major accomplishments of the year had been "gaining the sponsorship of the Homecoming concert".

A big reason that the American student does not have much time for political junketing is that he enters College with an unblinking determination to get a good degree. In the seriousness of his purpose he has much in common with his Indian counterpart. Impressions to the contrary, the Indian is in deadly earnest about getting a good degree; he is pain-

fully aware that it can make a difference in his future, even though that difference is not always spectacular. What is more he feels privileged for the opportunity of a higher education which his father, for the most part, did not have. In America, the undergrad sets himself a hard pace because a simple degree is not enough in a country which has nearly five million people pouring into the campuses every year. He must push ahead to post-graduate work and he must get good enough grades to be able to make it up there. Said a post-graduate student at Yale: 'Of the 102 men who majored with me, 85 have gone on to graduate work.' Added a student counsellor at Columbia: 'The push to graduate levels is rather peculiar to the States. In Britain for instance a much smaller percentage of high-calibre graduates go further.'

If the pressure of classwork puts the squeeze on political activity, it does not necessarily make the undergrad a dull fellow. In India a gay blade is usually not very good at his work—and the other way around. This is clearly not the case with the American undergrad. He seems to have achieved a better balance between book and beano. Princeton is a good example. The Library is crammed with the same earnest young men who in the evening can be discerned in the dark scaling a statue and placing an inverted lampshade on its noble head. They break out in many ways. This year certain sentinel points have been set up on all the main roads leading into the campus of this all-male university. Little gazebos have been built in which expressionless campus policemen keep day and night vigil. The purpose of these watchdogs is not clear to the undergrad except as a low measure to stall his efforts at smuggling in female guests after hours. A few nights ago a commando force of night-prowlers crawled up to each of these cabins and scrawled on its windows with a tablet of soap: 'Cop, go home'. One of these young men was nabbed at it and suspended for a week. He turned out to be a brilliant upperclassman with a very good academic record. Interviewed by the campus newspaper, he quipped that they had used Dial soap in their message to the policemen because its slogan is 'Round the clock protection'. A week later he could be seen at his usual corner at the Library buried in his reference books.

The weight of study has other side-effects too. In the words of the student President of one of the well-known fraternities: 'All week long the guys work their seats off. Then at the week ends they feel they have to make up for it. So they do everything they can to have a good time. Naturally this compulsive need to relax makes things rather tense.' Which is a euphemistic way of describing some of the truly orgiastic parties which this fraternity does have. Beer is officially served, but more often than not the youths carry hip flasks of hard liquor. They all have dates and those who don't are 'finks'. As the night advances the degree of socializing is such that one can only draw a hasty curtain over the 'tense' things that happen. One of the relatively innocent incidents was when the boys and their dates flooded the basement with beer, took

off their shoes and splashed in. They were trying to have a 'blast', as it is called. Not all fraternities are quite as unbridled but enough are to make a generalization, and many more would like to be. It is regarded as desirable to live high or to give the appearance of doing so. The ideal campus type is one who combines scholarship with social and/or athletic prowess. He is known as a 'good guy'. Students who display limited talents beyond their books are self-conscious about it. They are 'grinds'. To be a grind is to belong to a pretty undesirable species.

The social necessity to have a date can be crushing. On a big football week-end men who don't have dates would rather leave the campus than be seen around without one. One man even went to the curious length of inviting a female cousin when his original date cancelled out at the last minute. He had to save face and also secure his passport to the parties. At these parties a man and his date dance together all evening. There is very little, if any, interchange of partners between the men. 'Don't things get rather boring for the two' I asked a friend. He shrugged, 'That's the way it goes.' As to the dancing, it has the same form but is known by many names. The dancers stand about a pace apart, wave their arms and shake their hips. The gyrations are known by various titles—the Frug, the Watusi, the Monkey, the Bird, the Swim —but it all looks alike to the uninitiated. Nobody, but nobody, can do the Fox-trot or the Tango. In fact I asked a sweet young thing whether she could do the Jitterbug (which to my mind is a pretty contemporary dance) and she had honestly never heard of it! Makes one feel old the rapidity with which things change.

The amount of steady year-round work required of the student can be heavy. Very heavy. He is expected to arrive at each lecture having acquainted himself with a pre-set amount of material. His understanding of the lecture and his participation in the class depends on this. The reading list for the term covers the prescribed text and up to fifteen related books. A Dartmouth undergrad said he had to read about 300 pages a week for each course and he was taking five. It is of course left much to the judgment of the student just how much of this material he wants to cover. There is not a great deal of teacher-pupil contact except in some of the smaller Colleges. The lecture is usually a one-way affair, although a great deal is said about 'student participation' in the American system. The professor addresses a class which can be as big as anything we know in India. Even at Princeton, which is one of the smallest universities, a liberal arts course can comprise over 300 students in one room. It is true that this class is then broken up into smaller numbers for tutorials, but the professor does not take but one of the tutorials and the tutors are not always of equal calibre. In the larger campuses the distance between professor and student can be even more pronounced. Some of the classes in Berkeley can be so large as to defy accommodation even in the largest lecture-room. The problem is resolved by the professor lecturing to a television camera which pipes his instructions to a

series of closed circuit screens. A junior remarked wryly: 'I went through a whole year of History of Art without once being in the same room as the Professor.' Ghost teaching may be the coming thing. Lord forbid.

Just as the intimacy between teacher and taught weakens so does the closeness between the young and their parents. While the latter may be as close as anything we know of in India, the impression is not conveyed. When he is out of his teens the son regards himself, with his parents' concurrence and society's tacit consent, as a relatively independent agent. Most young men prefer to do their post-graduate work away from their home town. While emotional ties are doubtless strong they are not too overtly revealed. On the contrary, I was invited by a friend to his home for the Thanksgiving holiday. His mother lives alone. When we left she jokingly asked him : 'When do I meet you again.' Considering the University where he studies is just an hour away I was surprised when he replied, 'I'll be coming at Christmas—for a couple of days.' From the way she reacted I think she would have been taken aback had she heard any different. And yet he is as fond of his mother as any son could be. Another friend asked me to his home in California for a week over Christmas. He had not been home for six months and would probably not see his parents for another year. Yet on the day he arrived his parents dined out. On the second night he dined out. During his short stay he saw very little of his parents or they of him. And nobody was unhappy. To spend more than one or two evenings together would probably have embarrassed them both.

The fact is that the American youth grows up early. He is usually a self-assured person. Thanks to the educational system under which he is tutored he has a well-rounded acquaintance with a broad spectrum of subjects from philosophy and art to politics and chemistry. The system endeavours to give him an early maturity. More and more, undergrads are being given the opportunity to go abroad, free of cost.

In America, it is the Age of Youth. The young are the pace-setters. They set the fashions in clothes, music, cars. Even their jargon eventually finds itself in the adult lexicon. Today it is unfashionable to be middle-aged. Even if one is, one must 'think young', like the ads say. A Pepsi-Cola billboard best symbolizes the state of affairs. It shows a handsome greying couple drinking a glass of Pepsi and the headline urges: 'Come Alive! You're in the Pepsi generation!'

KASHMIR AND COMMUNIST CHINA

A. G. NOORANI

BEYOND QUESTION, the two great problems of our foreign policy are the border with Communist China and the dispute over Kashmir with Pakistan. However, as Mr. H. R. Vora of the *Times of India* reported last year (February 24), "One of the reasons for India's immobility is the little-known division of its External Affairs Ministry into two camps—those who believe in negotiating with China and those who prefer to negotiate with Pakistan." The recent trend has been to concede to China even to the extent of abandoning the full acceptance of the Colombo proposals, and to ward off any serious negotiation with Pakistan. Also, there are those who, equating China and Pakistan, are against negotiating with either.

No country has successfully fought two enemies at the same time. To equate China and Pakistan is to ensure their unity. It is plain that their concert is purely tactical. Even while the honeymoon is on President Ayub recognised publicly last year that Communist China does "propagate a rival ideology."

Therefore, choose we must between them for practical reasons alone. Unfortunately, it will not be incorrect to say that until shortly before his death, Mr. Nehru's own preference was to deal with Communist China. An initially conciliatory policy towards Pakistan was changed under Mr. Krishna Menon's influence to a hard one; in the case of China the firmness reflected in the pronouncements in 1959, immediately after the attack on Longju, gave way to appeasement. Sadly enough, the appeasement did not end, but increased after the invasion of October 1962. "There can be no mediation, conciliation or arbitration about these demands of the Chinese about large chunks of territory," Mr. Nehru said in 1959. In December 1962 he himself offered arbitration to the Chinese. On October 26, 1962 he wrote to the Heads of Government, "This is not a mere boundary dispute or a question of small territorial frontier adjustments." On December 12, the same year he said, "Here (China) it is essentially a boundary dispute, however big it may be." It was in keeping with this approach that while he withdrew the concessions made to Pakistan during the Swaran Singh-Butto talks on the ground that Pakistan had not accepted them, he did not on the same ground revoke our ill-advised and hasty acceptance of the Colombo proposals. Yet, what are the facts with regard to both?

In the case of China, there is the incontrovertible fact that both in 1954 and in 1956, when the Chinese Premier met Mr. Nehru, far from owning up his maps, he characterised them as of KMT origin, and accepted the McMahon Line (in 1955). On neither occasion did he question Indian maps. There was no territorial dispute; if there was he would have

raised it then. He marched in an army first and next sought to raise a "dispute". We, therefore, rightly characterised the matter as a case of aggression not of a dispute.

The aggression by Pakistan was against the State of Jammu & Kashmir. Thereafter that state acceded to India. The wrong, doubtless, continued.

Had the matter remained there, we could still have refused to negotiate. But after the aggression we entered into agreements with Pakistan to decide the future of the State by a plebiscite. The rights of both sides aggressor or victim were merged in these agreements, which have yet to be carried out.

The truth of the matter is that Kashmir is a part of the tragic events of 1947 ; that it is, as the Nehru-Mohammed Ali communique characterised it, a "dispute". Mr. Nehru himself said (July 8, 1949) "Kashmir is a world question." Only later did it become a purely domestic matter. Also he told Parliament (June 26, 1952), "Do not think you are dealing with a part of U.P., Bihar or Gujarat. You are dealing with an area, historically and geographically and in all manner of things with a certain background."

All that need be recognised is that while Kashmir's accession to India is perfectly legal, not void as Pakistan argues, it is a provisional one ; that a dispute does exist which we must resolve with Pakistan, and the people of Kashmir.

This needs to be stressed because the man who has been all for appeasing Communist China has been the very one against any settlement with Pakistan. Mr. Krishna Menon gave himself completely away in an interview with Mr. Rawle Knox, well after his resignation, when he said that while there was a "brother-in-law" relationship between India and China there could be no such intimacy with Pakistan. He also expressed himself against an Indo-Pak Confederation, surely a consummation worth wishing for.

The realities are plain enough. Communist China is a long term threat ; its sheer size, innate great-power complex and ideology make it so. Pakistan is a weaker neighbour aggrieved by a dispute, resorting to desperate and, at times, despicable tactics by reason of its military inferiority. Its propaganda is as revolting as it is mendacious. Communist China did not allow Pak hostility to stand in the way of a deal. Why need we ?

Every consideration points to community of interest. Every sign shows Communist China's threat to the entire Indo-Pak sub-continent. Mr. Nehru went a long way with Mr. Menon, but his was an error of judgment, not like Mr. Menon's, a defect of the instinct. In 1961 at a press conference in London when he attended the Commonwealth Premiers' Conference, a correspondent referred to his criticism of both Pakistan and China and proceeded to express the hope that the disputes

with Pakistan were more soluble. The Prime Minister instantly answered, "Of course, that is patent. Between Pakistan and India whatever may happen between them, essentially they remain family disputes. We may be very bitter against each other, but we are the same people who have lived together for hundreds of years. I think no doubt they will be solved." If this spirit informs our policy, if we show the same keenness in settlement that we show towards China, the Kashmir problem may well be resolved.

"It ill behoves
A man to claim
Too many loves.

A job to do
And you, and you
And, of course, YOU,
That's all my aim.

Too many loves
It ill behoves
A man to claim."

* * * *

"Do not look at me; they'll see
That you are looking.
We must try not to look
At one another,
And then you'll see
That when no one is looking
We can look at one another."

LONELY DAYS

N. da C.

YOU DON'T FEEL the sun anymore or the moon or the firm stalk of a flower anymore—colours are vague—no colour. Doors bang or open but you have no impulse of expectation or shock—there is nothing to expect nothing to be happy about—everything is memories. Doors that have banged or opened quite suddenly—grass has been green, the sun has warmed you and memories are quite intolerable, you don't feel anything will be repeated again. The sun is cold and grass is just grass not green not cool. Sheets are not cool anymore—blankets not warm—hot water is tepid. Music is the moments you heard it before, books are moments of time you were happy and alive—now laughter is hollow and careful, there is nothing to make you angry everything is even and evenly boring. There is a scream in you. You scream. But there is no sound. The nights are frightening—to go out and come into the flat alone to go up the lift alone and grope for the key and come into an empty flat, the hall so dark—you learn to leave all the lights on as though a blaze of lights were somehow a comfort—you learn a lot of cold comforts. At parties no sari makes you feel beautiful they are all the same and at the party you wish you were somebody else or at least a hundred miles away. And the talk does not involve you and still you mouth whole sentences as though you cared a little. And other people look beautiful and happy, have warm friendly fun and you are shut out in the coal-shed away from the fire. There is nothing to warm you—nothing to warm your hands at —you are cold. You are cold all the time,—the heart is a stone. You care but there is nothing to care about. Because you are dead only, you still eat and drink and climb the stairs and shake hands with hands, only you are dead. And the months don't pass they drag slowly by one at a time not as when you are happy and they fly past in bunches. The week-end comes but it is just another day and of no consequence, you get up at the same time and you eat the same food and dust the furniture—but the dust settles again. Seasons don't change it is all the same, all mornings, all afternoons, all evenings and nights. The clock ticks away and you are aware of every hour as it drags by leading you nowhere—you have nowhere to go nothing to do. So you dust the furniture and the dust resettles—you wind the clocks—you wait. You drink endless cups of tea and wash them carefully—it gives you something to do. You pay your bills you smoke a lot, you clear ash-trays and they get filled up again. The phone bell rings, you don't rush to answer it—who can it be —does it matter. It keeps ringing you answer it—a wrong number. The door bell rings—you go to answer it but its somebody elses bell not yours. Who were you waiting for ? You go back to your cigarette—to your book, to the clock that ticks and the fan that continues to revolve slowly giving

no comfort or relief just turning and turning because you switched it on —it will continue to turn because you forget to turn it off. For a change, for something to do you lie in the bath mindless and look at the taps, at the green soap the calendar still at January, the one red toothbrush and toothpaste—then you get out of the bath and step carefully on to the bath-mat and dry yourself very carefully and dress and go out on to the verandah and look at other people on their balconies looking at you—and night comes. You go to the kitchen and you wash some lettuce and two tomatoes and cut them up and then there seems no point anymore so you throw it all away and wonder if there is anything else you fancy. Nothing. But there must be something. You cut a lemon and suck it but instead of the sour unbearable taste you taste only the knife that cut the lemon. And you go back to living for the hour when the postman comes—and the day he comes with a letter you could hug him and the day there is none he understands and hurries away and you start waiting all over again and the letter is there and you read it in little bits and you leave it for later for the loneliest hours of all—the night. And you touch wood all time and you play games about how you will get a letter if you see ten red saris during the course of the morning.

And so on to the next day and the next and the biggest thing in your life is the postman and you can't thank him enough so you over tip him at Divali and again at Christmas and even the New Year and he is your only friend in your life. And you hate Sundays. There is no post on Sundays.

You buy some seeds—some flower seeds and you cover them up with dark brown earth and every day you water the dark brown earth with the seed underneath and you say to yourself that when the first flower comes and blossoms the loneliness will go and this is a secret between you and the seed. And you become obsessed with the secret and it is a day of pure joy when the first sign of green pushes itself through the dark brown earth. And you wait and it grows steadily in the sun and in the moon—and at odd times of the day and night you find yourself thinking of the plant and you go and look at it often and the new leaves are a pale fresh green and then there is the first tender bud and then you are breathless with waiting because things will be different when the flower emerges One day the flower is there and you are stunned because every thing is exactly the same with you and then the petals drop off on to the dark brown earth and you are exactly the same. So much has happened to the seed but you have remained the same.

A MATTER OF CRITICAL JUDGMENT

JAI NIMBKAR

HE HAD DOGGED their steps for two days and now he stood at the entrance of the restaurant watching them, thinking that it was his last chance.

It was not the sort of place where he would find himself under ordinary circumstances. He believed eating in a restaurant to be a vice that ranked with smoking and drinking. He indulged in none of them. His appearance, like his views about right and wrong, was clean-cut and prim. He wore a white dhoti, a cream-coloured coat and a black cap, and there was something about him which said school-teacher. That was how the objects of his scrutiny labelled him as he approached their table after his long moment of hesitation.

He tucked the long buff envelope under his left arm and folded his hands in a greeting.

The men at the table, who had been a merry and back-slapping trio, stopped laughing and eating. They all looked at him with the same expression of annoyed puzzlement which made them look like caricatures of one another.

"My name is Chitre."

"Yes?" One of the men said. He wore thick glasses and had sleek black hair which grew down his neck. He wore an open collared sports shirt with its buttons undone, and through the gap thus created a generous patch of his hairy chest was visible.

"You are Aniruddha Marathe, the poet, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"And this is Professor Rahalkar? Madhukar Rahalkar?"

The man thus addressed was in his late thirties, a sardonic-faced, hawk-nosed, thin-lipped man, professor of English and author of countless short stories and three novels. He nodded.

"I am Datta Soman," the third man said, "in case you are interested in my identity." He giggled in a high-pitched voice. He was the youngest of the trio, a plump boyish young man with unruly curls in which he took great pride. He was an up-and-coming novelist, the latest 'find' of an ambitious publisher.

They were in town to attend a Marathi writers' conference, but they seemed to take delight in each other's company rather than in the conference sessions in the college building a few blocks away. The Royal Cafe provided the backdrop for their get-togethers. They were not only aware of their own truancy, they revelled in it.

Nobody asked Mr. Chitre to sit down, but he sat down anyway, in the fourth unoccupied chair at their table.

"I wonder if you will be so kind as to spare a little time for me," he said in his distinct voice.

He produced the buff envelope and put it on the glossy tabletop. It was obvious that this moment required a lot of courage, but being what he was, he didn't spare himself. He said what he had to say with clarity and precision.

"I have some manuscripts here. A few short stories I have attempted to write. I shall be greatly obliged if you, all of you, will read them and offer your critical opinion. I shall value your guidance."

With this he released the envelope from his grasp with the grim determination of a father offering his first-born for sacrifice. It was not that he thought his attempt was not good enough. It was only that the significance of his action overpowered him. Seconds went by and the envelope remained unopened. Mr. Chitre looked at each of the celebrities with anxious questioning. The celebrities gave each other meaningful looks.

Then Rahalkar said, "Here's the waiter. What would you like to have, Mr. Chitre ?"

"I ? Oh nothing. I don't want anything."

Rahalkar looked into his cup as though he was just discovering that it was empty.

"Why don't you have some more tea ?" Mr. Chitre said.

"Well, why not ?" Marathe the poet said. "If our friend here is so kind as to treat us ? Datta, what will you have ?"

"More coffee for me."

"Just coffee ?"

"I could do with something to eat."

"Samosas ?"

"Sounds delicious. What about you, Rahalkar ?"

"I don't go for these fried things. Give me indigestion. I think I will be quite satisfied with a few sandwiches. Mutton."

"I rather fancy an icecream, myself," Marathe said. "I'll have a double chocolate icecream. Waiter—."

The mauve of the walls of the cafe deepened as curtains were pulled across the windows and electric lights were switched on. Hidden speakers piped out soft music which blended well with the manufactured night. The restaurant began to fill up. The waiter brought their orders and Soman said, "You must keep us company, Mr. Chitre. At least with a cup of coffee or tea. We won't feel comfortable eating while you starve. Especially since it's your party."

Mr. Chitre was essentially a courageous man. He rose to the occasion. "All right, one cup of tea," he said.

Finally the envelope was opened and the manuscripts taken out. There

were five of them, all quite short, written on one side of ruled foolscap sheets in a neat clerical hand. Rahalkar, perhaps because of seniority, was in command. He handed out a story to each of his friends and started on one himself.

For a while Mr. Chitre watched their faces, looking for their reactions. But it was difficult to sort out reactions since they ate and read simultaneously. So he examined the room and its other occupants. Young men in tight pants, girls in silks and lipsticks, prosperous looking middle-aged men. They all looked as though they were used to being in this place, yet there was about them that little extra gaiety and self-consciousness which made it a special occasion in their minds. Mr. Chitre didn't feel out-of-place. He sat erect and with a quiet dignity which discounted his deviation from the norm.

He watched everything until finally the buzz of conversation, the smells of food, the soft monotonous sound of the music, the slurring of cream into beige into pink into mauve in the decor of the room, all of it lulled his mind.

Rahalkar cleared his throat.

"Why did you think these were any good ?" he asked, waving about the story he had just finished.

"I didn't judge them. I wanted you to do that," Mr. Chitre said.

"How did you happen to write at all ? Did someone tell you you have talent ?"

"No. Nobody told me anything. I felt like writing, and I wrote."

Rahalkar sighed elaborately. Soman couldn't suppress a giggle. He hastily looked down at his plate and, picking up a samosa crumb, ate it thoughtfully and regretfully.

"Where did you find the themes ?" Marathe asked.

"Haven't you outgrown your adolescence yet ?" Rahalkar said. Then, as if musing to himself, he muttered, "Mother sacrificing her life for her child, the selflessness of young love, tearful reunions when everything past is forgotten and forgiven."

Again Soman giggled.

"This is not funny, Datta," Rahalkar said in a scolding tone. "It is serious as life itself. It is grim," he said between clenched teeth. Now even Marathe laughed, though he looked a little shocked. Datta Soman was not frankly enjoying himself.

Rahalkar's face was smooth. He said, "Who do you think will lap up this trash, Mr. Chitre ?"

Mr. Chitre said, "I don't know. That was for you to decide." He held his hand out. "You don't think it is good enough."

"I don't even think it is bad enough," Rahalkar said in a voice which he usually reserved to utter something of profound significance. He held

his hand out and Soman and Marathe put the manuscripts into it. He meticulously folded them, arranged them in a neat pile and put them back into the envelope with the movements of one performing a mystic ritual.

"Did you think writing was as easy as drumming ABCs into dull brains ?" he asked sympathetically, as one who wanted merely to elicit information.

"I am sorry to have taken up so much of your valuable time," Mr. Chitre said stiffly.

"Please try not to do it again," Rahalkar said imploringly. He pushed the little plate with the bill for the entire evening towards Mr. Chitre. "And thank you for your hospitality. I am so sorry we must part never to meet again. Farewell, noble friend." He sounded almost tearful. On this sorrowful parting note the three friends got up and left. It was not until they were well outside and the door closed behind them that Rahalkar let his face relax. First he smiled. Then, experimentally he gave a little laugh. Once he started he couldn't stop. He laughed in a rising crescendo until tears ran down his cheeks.

At nine rupees and seventy-five paise the bit of worldly wisdom was not too expensive. But Mr. Chitre did not tip the waiter. Perhaps nobody told him he was supposed to.

"Four ducks on a pond,
A grass bank beyond,
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing;
What a little thing
To remember for years—
To remember with tears."

* * * *

"There's many a crafty alchemist from Mecca to Jerusalem,
And Michael Scott and Merlin were reckoned very wise,
But I know a wizardry can take a wisp of sun-fire
And round it to a planet, and roll it through the skies,
With cities and sea-ports
And little shining windows,
And hedge-rows and gardens and loving human eyes."

PUNJABIS—SOME CHARACTERISTICS

R. P. BAGAI

I HAVE BEEN a Punjabi all these years without being conscious of what other people think about Punjabis. The awareness of being one was suddenly thrust on me when I joined a College in Uttar Pradesh. I used to wear chappals; a vest to me was a superfluity, and the sewing on of shirt-buttons if once broken, which used to be quite often, could be postponed until I had the good fortune to bring home a wife. I walked into the classromm, unaware of my 'hurting nakedness', broad-shouldered, in my usual irrelevant way, when an over-dressed Sophist abstracted what he called the 'rawness' of my make-up to be an unalienable part of the Punjabi character.

Punjabis outside the Punjab are known by a single symbol: Bhangra —a joy dance of the farmers—which has been representing, and still does, Punjabi culture. This lack of tragic sense is related to the Punjab's rich farmers. Their hearts flow with the abundance of the Ravi and the Chenab (before partition) and their gay, festive opulence, and their broad-shouldered rawness, fits in their pattern of life—an extended Baisakhi.

Punjabis are also 'famous' for their vulgarity. All those who have read the vulgarity, sandwiched between politics, yoga and films, of a man half-trying to be a homeopath, half a satyromaniac, know the way he hits at the Punjabis. One can disagree with him, one cannot totally prove him wrong. There is hardly any people in the world who have produced such a language, hardly any people who would use—words as frequently as honeymooning couples their lips and almost twice as naturally as a traffic policeman his hands. Of my own relatives I scarcely know one—girls excepted—who will be able to complete a sentence without a generous sprinkling of 'those' words. Sometimes the compulsion to use them is so precipitate that the words sound like one of those David Rudkin's musical experiments with the English language—'Shake—bloody—speare'. This is true not only of the tall, muscular *jats* of Patiala or Amritsar but of the unfolksy Delhiwalla-Punjabis.

But some of the Punjabis in Delhi, the younger generation especially, are scarcely recognisable. I couldn't have known from the talk the receptionist at a Travel Agent's office was having with a client if she was a Punjabi had she not told me herself. There are also Punjabis who will not disclose that they are Punjabis for all that they connote in the name of vulgarity, rawness, muscularity, unrefinement, folksyness, etc. Some even initial their first name to give a strange one-and-a-half-word effect. Most of them will not talk in their mother-tongue, some speak in Hindi (mothers educated a little will not talk to their children in what they think is an unrefined tongue and will coerce the kids to speak in Hindi), public- and convent-schools educated invariably talk in American English.

In fact the American way of life has influenced the young Punjabis very much. I think Punjabis were the first to adopt tight clothes, tapered pants, American jerkins and 'sleeveless-ness'. An Anglo-Indian who sometime back fell in love with a handsome Punjabi calls them "the Americans of India". She says, that at least in Delhi they are the new rich, the total philistines, have no roots in the past, and are as hollow inside as a dressed-up effigy. Meretriciousness characterises their attempts to look sophisticated, ultra-modernity in clothes tries to cover up unsuccessfully their awful vulgarity, and their American-English betrays their attempts to hide their ludicrous Punjabi accents. Punjabis are said to plan their budget—if they ever do a thing methodically—with fifty per cent on clothes, thirty-five per cent on 'Tandoori Murghas' (or other eatables or drinkables) and fifteen per cent on superfluities like education, books, etc.

Compared to the rootless Punjabis in Delhi, the farmers are simpler and more hard-working. The land of plenty has been tilled and laboured on to produce rich harvests. And then the Punjab has always been the battlefield to numerous invaders. Historically, the Punjabis have been very tough, brave and valorous soldiers. Fed on rich protein diet (milk, butter and butter-milk, the latter being one of their symbols like *Bhangra*) they have collectively taken pride in thumping their shoulder-muscles. *Akharas* (open-air gyms) have been of greater use in their lives than educational institutions, and, where they have been farming from generation to generation, they have been implicitly installing in posterity the use of muscles with greater frequency than of brains. Part of their bellicose nature is the result of history and part of their pugnacity is the seeming welcome accorded to a certain amount of rumbustiousness in action and talking. The intelligentsia is, therefore, conspicuous by its absence. The literature that is being produced in Punjabi is on the whole unsophisticated. This is very evident in plays and films. Even in Delhi, these cater to the sort of people who regard a Punjabi film as an occasion for raucous laughs, often aroused by vulgar 'double entendre'.

Punjabis, on the other hand, are extremely hard-working. This could not be proved better than by the fact that the refugees of yesterday are almost equipped to run rehabilitating homes for those who were their rehabilitators. Having lost almost all their belongings in Pakistan, Punjabis set about to adapt themselves to new ways, starting from scratch. They knew the dignity of labour, some drove taxis, others opened pavement stalls, some started greengrocers' shops, others became tongawallas. The settled business of Delhi got a severe shock and, today, if one finds new colonies, new markets, new shopping centres and hundreds of small-scale industries it is due to the ingenuousness of the Punjabis. Like the proverbial camel the Punjabi too has sometimes driven from the tents its complacent occupant.

This, however, does not, or should not, prove that Punjabis are good businessmen. Though they have started taking pains they are only malleable, amorphous, adaptable, hard-working; they have no sense of

business. Most of their methods (in politics also) are primitive; their business sense is exercised in killing the golden goose; they would much rather gaze on the bird in hand than think of how to snare the thousands in the bushes. To them goodwill in business is a thing of no importance, and very few of them are really far-sighted.

Punjabis are believed to talk to their wives in the same colloquial tongue in which they converse with other Punjabis. From the sound of their words in conversation one would guess that they are always fighting (which is also true). The women usually do not use 'those words' like their men; they make, on the other hand, in less amicable moments extensive use of utensils in their kitchens to let their husbands taste their sublimated passions. When the women are not with their husbands they are with other women—mud-slinging and gossiping. Garrulity has been their paramount characteristic, and only some in Delhi engage themselves in other vocations.

There is a marked dichotomy in the two generations, and very few of this 'age' will like to introduce us to their fathers—they think it will uncover their 'raw' roots. The younger generation doesn't know the *Gurumukhi* script, and hardly likes to speak in Punjabi—unless hard up for an American equivalent in their limited vocabulary. They are furious if recognised as Punjabis. They are busy forgetting *Bhangra* and *lassi*, and, going to the colleges, are getting acquainted with stronger dances and stronger drinks.

"Be afraid of grandeurs, O my soul,
And if you cannot conquer your ambitions,
With hesitations always and precautions
Follow them up."

ADOLESCENT'S DIARY : THREE PICTURES

P. RAO

QUEUED UP with many other nineteen-year-olds at the Maratha Mandir. A few overtly deeper sorts with two-day growths and Kolhapuri chappals, smoking. Charminar; the cigarette of the Indian intellectual. Pulled out my own packet and smoked more than usual; everybody was smoking. Chainsmoked two because I thought a woman was looking at me. Anyway. Got two tickets after three hours of waiting. Friday 12-30 Winter Light. Bergman; much too familiar; don't know him at all. Ingmar Bergman.

On to Lotus—Knife in the Water—more queuing. Only shows available 12-30 and 3-30, Friday. Got the 3-30. Hope fellow nineteen-year-old at Chitra had to queue as long for the Lower Depth.

Winter Light. What is so frightening about the Chinese A-bomb, as somebody said, is not the actuality of their having the bomb but the fact that they are quite willing to use it. If you think long enough and realise there is no worthwhile end in sight—the process of living itself becomes frightening. Jonas something (I forget the Swedish surname) says in reply to the doubting-Thomas-priest's naturally unconvincing speech about Faith and living on: "Why should I live?" Quite calmly. Why should I live. That is the tone of the whole picture; in the usual language—controlled, pastel-shaded, deft strokes etc. (Truth is so much more beautiful in black and white don't you think?). But 'Winter Light' is much too obvious; but then the film is simple. Not simple enough for Bombay University though. They laughed at suggestive sub-titles like "Doesn't it fit?" So much so that I have forgotten the context of the sub-title myself. And again when the priest lists the little sordid-everyday things he hates in the woman that loves him. Like her myopia and her colds and her constant cosseting. It just bounced off them, the lucky people. If I see the picture again it will really be for these two things: Jonas saying "why", and the shattering list of the unfortunate woman's faults. There can be nothing so sickening, I think, as somebody you are indifferent to—loving you.

Beginning to wish I were a professional footballer or cricketer.

I must protest properly about calling it 'Winter Light' when the real name is 'the Communicants'. Winter Light is not pastel enough. Also it would have delighted me much more to discover the half-light for myself. And to call the priest Thomas when he was so obviously a doubting-Thomas. This does not fit in with the honesty of the rest of the picture. It is clever-clever.

Got to the Lotus at 3 after lunch, early. Hung about the booking window. Heard the man behind the counter saying a hurried yes to a

man who said : "I am willing to go up to Rs. 5." Noted dully that more and more things are becoming just things and do not excite me to think of them as right or wrong. I shall probably continue to do the right by force of habit ; by force of a good father's principles. But of what use is that ?

Knife in the Water. Bikini clad woman. Beautiful when she took off her glasses. More action—some tricky—crowd's attention held. Mine too, obviously. Disappointment, that bikini clad women excite me. But why not ? I am just being normal. I am a part of the crowd. Woman makes love to both men more or less dully. Can't remember now whether the film had sub-titles or was dubbed. Good stuff. Happy ending—thank God. Felt a depression coming on in the interval after seeing two fat colourless girls who look as if they will never get married. And a short man with a tall girl over whom he was making a fool of himself. Girl from my college sitting next to me. My arm brushes against her's but is allowed to stay. Pressure tells me she expects to have her hand held. I hold it. After a time small pressures and pluckings at my finger-tips. She is making love to my hand. I am frightened that it should mean so much to her and so little to me. I withdraw my hand. But not gently enough. She looks at me and is obviously hurt ; shrinks to the corner of her seat. Why can't these girls be strong and self-assured like this bikinied creature in front ? Or is it I who am not as suave as the man ? Feel quite sick. Grab her hand and hold it. She relents after initial holding back and surprise. Allow my hand to be pinched and plucked and do some of it myself. If it keeps her happy.... why not ? But how dare I be so condescending ? What right have I to pity ? Perhaps we are both to blame, being part-rooted..... All this analysis.

Should have been a footballer.

Forgot to look up the name of the beautiful actress as usual.

9-30. The Lower Depth. Did not know till after the end that it was actually "The Seven Samurai".—Had I known I would have liked it much more. That's not true. Why am I making these silly jokes to myself ? I knew this morning that it was the Seven Samurai. Also, the credits said so. A long picture—finished at 1 a.m. My pleasure was of a vicarious sort—from liking the Magnificent Seven so much.

But Akira Kurosawa.....

Perhps my critical faculties were numbed after two pictures and the running around ; and the hot theatre. And the sleep.

Here I am trying to find excuses for something I honestly felt..... Ultimately you either like a movie or you don't. Still, tried to explain to a more honest friend who said he didn't like it that the associations between this and the Magnificent Seven were marvellous. I could see that I wasn't being convincing. Then I became irritated and more honest and said of course I preferred The Magnificent Seven vastly. After all one can't help admiring the slickness of even the Time magazine sometimes.

So why not Hollywood ? Let's be fair (do I mean honest ?), shall we ? At least I was more honest than one of the group who was clearly

baffled as to what to say. He muttered something about it being somewhat commercial-but-technically-very-good. And when I said teasingly, sick, "But Akira Kurosawa.....", he repeated that it wasn't known as Kurosawa's best. I felt very sick. Another waited till the next day to pronounce the picture good. But he hadn't seen three pictures that day. He was normal. And after a long sleep I was normal too and didn't fight. But I didn't say to myself: "Perhaps he did like it, perhaps to some people it was good....." Neither did I tell him the Wildean thing about how one could never say a picture was good or bad but only whether one liked it or not. That would have made me sick again.

"How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death
Nor tied unto the world with care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise
Or vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed
Whose conscience is his strong Retreat
Whose state can neither flatterers feed
Nor ruin make oppression great.

That man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands
And having nothing, yet hath all."